



Building Collaborative Relationships

SESSION

3

Facilitator's Script



3 hours,
10 minutes total



5 minutes

Building Collaborative Relationships

Introduction and Overview

Welcome to our training session on “Building and Enhancing Collaborative Relationships.” My name is _____.

I represent the voice of _____ (family, early intervention, early care and education). Facilitating with me today are

_____ (name/voice) and _____ (name/voice).



Facilitators briefly introduce themselves and describe the unique background and experiences they bring to this session.

Today, we’re going to look at several different aspects of collaboration. We are going to:

- ♦ *Identify the community resources that are available to or needed by families of infants and toddlers with disabilities in your communities.*
- ♦ *Think about what resources and gaps exist.*
- ♦ *Examine relationships among programs in your communities.*

Building Collaborative Relationships

We can develop inclusive services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families only through collaboration and teaming with others. We each have expertise, but, for our services to be the best they can be for children and families, we all need help from others.



Add participant introductions/openers, as needed.

Review Learning Outcomes and Agenda.

See Facilitator's Guide.

Learning Outcomes



Handout #1: Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for this session are:

- ♦ *Participants will consider the need for and the value of community collaboration to provide high-quality services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.*
- ♦ *Participants will explore available resources in the community for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.*
- ♦ *Participants will examine relationships among community partners serving infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.*

Agenda

Agree on Ground Rules

Collaborative Partnerships

- View DVD: *Together We're Better*
- Large-Group Discussion

Activity: Identifying Community Resources

- Lecturette and Discussion
- Community Mapping: Small-Group Activity
- Community Relationships: Small-Group Activity
- Large-Group Discussion

Gathering Information about Community Resources

Wrap-Up

Reflections/Continuous Improvement



5–10 minutes



Agree on Ground Rules

See Facilitator's Guide.

Chart and post ground rules.



45 minutes total



20 minutes



Collaborative Partnerships

View DVD: *Together We're Better*

Handout #2: Acknowledgements: *Together We're Better*

Handout #3: Guided Viewing: *Together We're Better*

We are going to look at a DVD entitled *Together We're Better*. This DVD is about 10 minutes long and was produced by the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program in 2002.

The speakers in the DVD give specific illustrations of strategies for successful teaming and integration of services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. As you watch the DVD, think about the following questions (you may record your thoughts on the Guided Viewing Handout #3):

- ♦ *What stood out for you in the definitions of teams?*
- ♦ *What were some of the themes that the families and service providers shared about working together for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?*
- ♦ *What examples did you hear or see of people working together to support the inclusion of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?*
- ♦ *Are there any strategies for building collaboration that you have used in your work with community partners?*
- ♦ *What ideas did you hear that might be helpful in your work with community team members?*



Start DVD: *Together We're Better* (10 minutes)



25 minutes



Large-Group Discussion

Does anyone have any reactions to what you saw or heard on the DVD?

- *What stood out for you in the definitions of "teams"?*
- *What were some of the themes that the families and service providers shared about their working together for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?*
- *What examples did you hear or see of people working together to support the inclusion of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?*
- *Are there any collaborative strategies that you have used in your work with community partners?*
- *What ideas did you hear that might be helpful in your work with community team members?*



Discuss each of the questions for about 5 minutes each.

Summarize the points from the discussion above.



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ♦ *Importance of having a shared vision and philosophy*
- ♦ *Listening and communication are critical*
- ♦ *Learning from each other*
- ♦ *Keeping the family as the focus—how will this help the family?*
- ♦ *“We’ll figure it out together”*

Please keep the themes and strategies discussed in the DVD in mind as we identify ways to facilitate collaboration among all those involved in the lives of young children with disabilities and their families.



**1 hour,
40 minutes total**



15 minutes

Activity: Identifying Community Resources

Lecturette and Discussion

You are probably familiar with the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Children with disabilities and their families need a village of program and community partners to work together collaboratively to meet their diverse needs. Let’s consider some of the strategies for enhancing collaborative relationships. First, it is important to know who’s in your community. What are the resources available to families in your community? Do you have a relationship with these partner resources? Do you understand what they do? Do you plan together to meet the needs of the families you jointly serve?

Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families receive services in their natural environments. Natural environments are where children

without disabilities receive services or participate in activities. IDEA also requires the coordination of services. Federal laws and regulations, including IDEA and the Head Start Performance Standards, recognize the importance of collaboration and teamwork to respond to the needs and priorities of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. They encourage the principle that services should be provided to families in their community where they are known and cared about. They also emphasize that everyone working with a family should be communicating and coordinating their services.

To support and promote collaborative service delivery, providers must be familiar with their community. In the following activities, you are going to:

- ♦ *Identify formal **and** informal resources available for families in your community*
- ♦ *Look at the programs and services and the quality of the relationships among service providers*

When service providers think about available community resources, they usually think about what are known as formal systems of support. **Formal systems of supports** are those that are paid for, often have set hours of operation, and involve professional service providers.

Informal systems of support are those that are free or are bartered—for example, “I do this for you and sometime you’ll do something for me.” Informal systems include people (such as family members and friends) or community groups (such as churches, service organizations, or recreational groups). All of us have both informal and formal systems of support.



Give an example of informal support from your own experience. Examples: trading babysitting for taking in the mail or watering plants for friends when they are away; or storing a neighbor's car in return for peaches from his tree.

We're going to begin by looking at your personal informal and formal resources for support. Please take out a piece of paper to record your ideas. Think about all the different places you have gone to get some kind of help or support within the past 2 weeks. List everything that comes to mind. Then go back through the list and circle those resources that are informal and check those that are formal.



Of the resources you have used, how many are formal services and how many are informal?

Do you personally prefer to use formal or informal resources?

How do you think this relates to the families you serve?

Do you think that families in your programs are encouraged and supported to use both formal and informal supports?

**Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:**

- ♦ *People usually find that supports are about 50 percent informal and 50 percent formal.*
- ♦ *Many people prefer to use informal supports over formal supports.*
- ♦ *Service systems need to acknowledge the value of both informal and formal support systems.*
- ♦ *Service systems need to support families to build on or extend their personal informal support systems.*

Service providers working with families usually have more access to formal supports. When providers listen to a family, they need to be aware of both formal and informal support systems and build on the resources that are natural for that family; that is, ones they already have in place. For example, providers can learn about a family's informal supports, such as a neighbor helping with babysitting or a grandmother providing additional transportation, before suggesting that families explore additional resources. A family's use of informal resources, however, does not mean they do not wish to pursue formal supports to supplement what they already have in place.

*30 minutes*

Community Mapping: Small-Group Activity

Break participants into small groups.

If participants came from the same program, ask them to work together in small groups to create a map of their program/ community. Each small group should develop its own map.

If participants do not work in the same program, ask them to form small groups in which participants complete the map individually and then discuss their maps together.

If you have family members as participants (or as trainers), encourage them to share their perspectives on community resources.



Handout #4: Mapping Your Community

Please find your Handout #4: Mapping Your Community and make a map of the resources in your community that serve infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Include both formal and informal systems of support.

Community mapping is a process of creating a picture of community resources and the relationships among these community programs and agencies. The mapping process can be used in a variety of ways: for yourself personally, for families you serve, or for your program and community.

Put your name or your program's name in the circle in the center. Other circles represent programs and services in your community that provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

On your map, write the names of the programs or agencies that provide supports and services to families in your community.

In small groups, look at your map and consider:

- ♦ *Are there any gaps or duplications in services?*
- ♦ *What additional services might families want or need?*



40 minutes

Community Relationships: Small-Group Activity

We hope this community mapping activity will provide insights into your community networks. Further examination might identify gaps that can serve as the basis for developing new services or programs.

Now we are going to consider the relationships among the various service providers in your community. We will use the community maps that you have developed to look at relationships among programs and services in your community. How would you rate the relationships between your program and the various organizations that you work with to serve families of infants and toddlers with disabilities?

In small groups, rate the quality of your community relationships using the following system:

- ♦ *Draw a heavy line between those agencies or services where there is a strong, two-way relationship.*
- ♦ *Use a broken line to represent a tenuous relationship between agencies.*
- ♦ *Draw a crosshatch line to represent relationships among agencies where there is a stressful relationship.*

The rating key is on the handout. You have about 20 minutes to complete this activity.

SESSION
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Building Collaborative Relationships



15 minutes



Large-Group Discussion

What do you notice about your community map?

What factors determine the quality of the relationships?

Are there particular systems where relationships needed to be strengthened or built?



Take about 5 minutes to discuss each question.

As you have noted, your working relationships vary from agency to agency. If providers are to link families effectively with resources, agencies must understand one another and work together for the benefit of the children and families served.



15 minutes

Gathering Information about Community Resources

To be useful to families, your referrals to other agencies must be appropriate and well-planned. Your referral process must facilitate families' access to the resources they need and want. These may include providing information about the benefits of a service, current contact information—including the name and phone number of the contact person—fees, directions, etc. To be sure your referrals are effective, you must understand what other agencies do and why.

Having a clear picture of your community partners and their missions, purposes, service areas, populations served, fees, and eligibility requirements helps you to build collaborative relationships within your community and improves services to families.



Handout #5: Learning about Your Community Partners

Please take out Handout #5: Learning about Your Community Partners. This is a tool for gathering needed information about services in your community. Take a minute to review the handout.

Programs should contact all of their community partners, as well as agencies they don't collaborate with yet, to gather information for this worksheet. Once the information is gathered, consider the most useful and effective way to disseminate it to all staff and families in your agency. Consider developing systems of information on community resources that families can access in user-friendly ways. One approach would be to develop a database or other referral system for staff and families. However the information is organized, you'll also want to find ways to share it with other agencies to enable all programs in your community to know more about each other. This information-gathering effort can mark the beginning of the teaming process with new programs and agencies, or it can be a way to extend and/or solidify relationships with agencies you're already working with.

Please take the next 10 minutes to develop a plan for completing this worksheet and for using and disseminating the information.

You can work individually or in small groups.

*5 minutes*

Wrap-Up

Providing quality services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families requires that you work closely with a number of community partners. Today you developed a map of your community resources for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, and identified possible gaps and duplications in your service system. You evaluated your relationships with some of these organizations and agencies. You developed a plan to gather information to ensure that families have access to the resources they need.

Do you have any questions about today's session?



Review Learning Outcomes.

See Facilitator's Guide.

*10 minutes*

Reflections/Continuous Improvement

We would like to give you an opportunity to think about how this session applies to your work situation. Please take a few minutes and list 2–3 strategies you can start to use right away.



Gather Continuous Improvement feedback.

See Facilitator's Guide.

Your suggestions for improvements help us to make our sessions responsive to your needs as learners. We'd like to hear about what worked for you in this session, and what could be done to facilitate your learning.



Divide a piece of chart paper into two columns, as shown. Entitle one column **“What worked?”** and the other column **“Suggestions for improvement.”**

What worked?	Suggestions for improvement



Chart participants' comments without rebuttal or discussion. Facilitators can act on these suggestions, as appropriate, in future training sessions.



What worked for you today?

What suggestions for improvement do you have?

We appreciate your participation today.

End training session